

A N N U A L R E P O R T
OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
OF THE ALNWICK RURAL DISTRICT
FOR THE YEAR 1943.



Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As for the last four years, this is a war-time report, and its brevity is accounted for by the restrictions imposed upon me from headquarters, (Circular 10/44 England). I am instructed to report briefly on subjects of current interest, but on going through the circular, I find there is little left beyond the weather and some infectious diseases not very prevalent in the Alnwick Rural District.

The Officers of the Council are as before.

1. Richard Rothwell, Clerk to the Council.
2. Scott Purves, M.D., M.B., C.M., Ed., Medical Officer of Health.
3. Oswald Mozart Farrell, Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A., Chief Sanitary Inspector and Building & Sanitary Surveyor.

Climatic Conditions.

After a very mild winter followed by a comparatively early spring, the rest of the year, although rather lacking in sunshine, presented no very remarkable conditions.

General Statistics.

The area of the Alnwick Rural District is 93,000 acres - 145.3 square miles.

The number of inhabited houses is 3828.

The Rateable Value is 50942

The sum represented by a penny rate is £218.

The population as estimated by the Registrar General is 11,840.

Vital Statistics.

The number of deaths in the district for 1943, after the usual additions and subtractions for transferable deaths, was 145. Of these 82 were males and 63 females. The number of births in the district was 158. Of these 63 were males & 75 females. The following shows the deaths and death rate and the births and Birth rate..

	Deaths.	Death Rate.	Births.	Birth Rate.
1943.	145	12.25	158	13.34.

The following table is an analysis of the ages at which the deaths occurred.

Under One	One & 2 yrs.	2 & 5 yrs.	5 & 15 yrs.	15 & 25 yrs.	25 & 35 yrs.	35 & 45 yrs.	45 & 55 yrs.	55 & 65 yrs.	65 & 75 yrs.	75 yrs. and over	Total.
8	0	2	1	2	9	1	12	28	36	46	145

This table may be considered fairly satisfactory, the deaths having occurred mainly at the old age end. The deaths

under one year were 8 in number, and all the numbers up to 25 are very low indeed.

Infantile Death Rate.

As already stated the deaths under one year were 8 in number. This in a total of births of 158, gives an infantile death rate of 50.6 per 1,000 born, which is satisfactory. When I became Medical Officer of Health in 1893, an infantile death rate of 140 was not unusual.

Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

	<u>Warkworth.</u>	<u>Embleton.</u>
Whooping Cough	17	15
Measles	3	11
Chicken Pox	1	8
Scarlet Fever	3	7
Cerebrospinal Fever	1	0
Pneumonia	2	2
Weils Disease	1	0
Malaria	0	1
	28	44

This table of notifiable infectious disease (excluding tuberculosis, which is dealt with later) is notable in several ways. In the first place the total is comparatively small at 72 and next there is a remarkable absence of the more serious diseases, from a sanitary point of view, such as typhoid of various forms and diphtheria, and last the absence of fatalities, the only death being one from whooping cough, which occurred outside the district, but was transferred to us as belonging to our district. The epidemic of measles has gradually died away and that of whooping cough was following just towards the end of the year.

Diphtheria Immunisation has been well received and well carried out in the district. Of the children of school age (5 to 15) 95% are protected and of those under five years 75%, but a larger proportion of the latter will doubtless receive attention in due time. This result may I think be taken as a triumph for non-compulsion, as the stubborn Northumbrian may be led, but is difficult to push.

Tuberculous Disease.

During the year 1943, there were notified in the district 18 cases of tuberculous disease. Of these 14 were pulmonary and 4 non-pulmonary. Of the pulmonary cases 6 were male and 8 female. The deaths from tuberculous disease were 7 in number, six being pulmonary and one non-pulmonary. Of the fatal cases 4 were males and 3 females.

New cases of Tuberculous Disease and Mortality in the District.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non - pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-- pulmonary.	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
10	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
25	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
35	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
45	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0
55	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
65 & over	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
	6	8	2	2	3	4	1	0

The notification of Tuberculous Disease is satisfactorily carried out in the district.

Cancer.

During the year 1943, 16 deaths from cancer were registered in the district. This must be considered to be favourable as the number is less than the average for some years.

Water Supplies.

I have been asked to report specially on the water supplies to individual houses. As far as I have been able to ascertain the following is the situation.

1. Number of inhabited houses in the district - 3828.
2. Approximate number of houses with water under pressure into house or to a tap on outside wall of house - 2744.
3. Approximate number of houses within 100 yards of, but not connected to a supply main - 713.

The difficulty in obtaining supplies for single houses or small places has always been that compulsion was limited by the "reasonable cost", which was generally quite insufficient to cover the expense of piping for any considerable distance.

Finally I have to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for their consideration and support. During the year 1943 I have been specially indebted to the Clerk and Inspector for their help in carrying on my work at a time when, but for the medical requirements of the war, I might have felt it due, both to the Council and myself, to resign my duties to younger hands.

SCOTT PURVES, M.D.
Medical Officer of Health.

